

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 TRSE-00 XMB-07

OPIC-12 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 HEW-08 IO-14

CU-04 DRC-01 /184 W

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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4836

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN

SUBJ: BUDGET DEBATE - PM MANLEY ANNOUNCES MINIMUM WAGE LEGIS-
LATION AND LOCAL GOVT REFORMS

REF: KINGSTON 1859

1. IN HIS SIX HOUR BUDGET SPEECH, PM MANLEY DISCUSSED A WIDE
RANGE OF SUBJECTS, THE HIGH LIGHT OF WHICH ARE SUMMARIZED BE-
LOW.

2. MINIMUM WAGE LEGISLATION: A NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE LAW WOULD
COME INTO EFFECT BY DEC 1. THE LEGISLATION WOULD NOT ONLY PRO-
VIDE FOR MINIMUM WAGES, BUT WOULD ALSO SET MAXIMUM WORKING HOURS
FOR ALL CATEGORIES OF WORKERS. THE REASON FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF THE LAW WAS TO PROVIDE FOR THE 450,000 MEMBERS OF THE LABOR
FORCE OUTSIDE THE UNION MOVEMENT. THE DRAFT LAW WOULD BE SUB-
MITTED TO THE LABOR ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR STUDY NEXT WEEK, FOLL-
OWING WHICH THE BILL WOULD BE TABLED IN PARLIAMENT NO LATER THAN
AUG 1 AND PASSED BY OCT 1. FOLLOWING PASSAGE, THE ADVISORY COMM-
MISSION ESTABLISHED BY THE BILL WOULD CONDUCT 8 WEEKS OF HEARINGS
CONCERNING THE APPROPRIATE MINIMUM WAGE AND WORKING HOURS. A
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CABINET LEVEL DECISION WOULD THEN BE TAKEN IN TIME FOR A MIN-

IMUM WAGE PROCLAMATION TO BECOME EFFECTIVE BY DEC 1.

3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM: MANLEY ANNOUNCED THE FOLLOWING LOCAL GOVT REFORMS A) COUNCILLORS WOULD CONTINUE TO SERVE WITHOUT PAYMENT, BUT ALLOWANCES WERE SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED, B) SOME AUTONOMY/ TAXATION WOULD BE GIVEN LOCAL AUTHORITIES, C) LOCAL AUTHORITIES WOULD HAVE CERTAIN AREAS OF ACTION WHICH DID NOT REQUIRE CENTRAL GOVT APPROVAL, AND D) MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT WOULD NO LONGER SIT ON PARISH COUNCILS.

4. NEW MENTAL HEALTH LAW: AMENDMENTS WOULD BE INTRODUCED TO THE MENTAL HEALTH LAW WHICH WOULD PROVIDE THAT MENTALLY ILL PERSONS APPREHENDED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES WOULD BE REFERRED TO A CLINIC OR HOSPITAL RATHER THAN TAKEN TO JAIL. PERSONS VOLUNTARILY ENTERING A MENTAL INSTITUTION WOULD DO SO AT GOVT EXPENSE.

5. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT: THE LITERACY PROGRAM HAD BEEN REORGANIZED AND A TOTAL OF 5,000 VOLUNTEER TEACHERS WERE NOW BEING TRAINED. BY NEXT YEAR 150 FULL-TIME DAY CENTERS WOULD BE ESTABLISHED, 5,000 NIGHT CLASSES ORGANIZED, AND 200 DAY CALASSES ESTABLISHED IN FACTORIES AND OTHER BUSINESS PLACES. MANLEY ANNOUNCED THAT 19,000 PUPILS IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS WOULD REMAIN A FURTHER TWO YEARS AFTER AGE 17 TO ACQUIRE "LIFE SKILLS" - TRAINING IN GOOD CITIZENSHIP, DISCIPLINE, WORK ATTITUDES, ETC. - AND DESCRIBED THIS AS "THE GREATEST SINGLE EDUCATIONAL ADVANCE IN THE HISTORY OF THE COUNTRY."

6. CRIME: REPLYING TO CRITICISM OT THE GUN COURT, MANLEY STATED THESE MEASURES WERE NECESSARY SINCE INVESTIGATIONS HAD REVEALED THAT LOCAL CRIME WAS DIRECTLY TIED TO ORGANIZAED CRIME ABROAD AND AN INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY WAS INVOLVED. THE GOVT WAS MAKING PROGRESS IN THE FIGHT ALTHOUGH A LONG ROAD STILL LAY AHEAD.

7. MANLEY ALSO ANNOUNCED A NUMBER OF OTHER NEW MEASURES INCLUDING PENSION INCREASED, HIGHER SALARIES FOR NURSES, STREET MARKETS FOR SIDEWALK VENDORS, FIVE NEW FACTORY COMPLEXES FOR SMALL BUSINESSMEN, COOPERATIVE OWNERSHIP OF PRIME SUGAR LANDS, AND WAGE INCREASES FOR WORKERS IN STATUTORY BODIES.

8. COPY OF SPEECH WILL BE POUCHED AS SOON AS AVAILABLE.
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